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May 16, 2007

Mr. David M. Walker
Comptroller General
Government Accountability Office
441 G Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Walker:

The Base Closure and Realignment Commission hotly debated proposals affecting the Air National Guard and made numerous changes to Air Force and Department of Defense recommendations. The Air Force originally called for removal of aircraft from almost 36 of the Air National Guard's 89 bases. Citing homeland defense concerns expressed by Governors and other state officials, the Commission decided to keep aircraft at ten bases the Air Force proposed to strip and recommended smaller squadrons in an effort to keep even more Guard bases.

Ultimately, the end result left numerous Air National Guard flying units with personnel who had no mission since their aircraft were retired or assigned elsewhere. BRAC recommendations also directed the specific movement of personnel and platforms between Air National Guard bases. Some recommendations required personnel to remain at "enclaves" to support traditional missions providing military assistance to civilian authorities. Many States also filed lawsuits disputing the Pentagon's authority to move bases or strip them of their aircraft, lawsuits that are still pending.

As GAO reported in *Military Base Closure: Management Strategy Needed to Mitigate Challenges and Improve Communication to Help Ensure Timely Implementation of Air National Guard Recommendations* (GAO 07-641) the Air Force now anticipates a \$53 million dollar annual cost to implement BRAC. This stands in stark contrast to the original estimate of \$26 million dollar annual cost savings. Although the Director of the Air National Guard, along with the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, created a plan called Total Force Integration (TFI) to address ANG wings without missions, funding for such new missions has not been identified. For example, funding for the Joint Cargo Aircraft, a major new mission area, has not been addressed in the current National Defense Authorization bill.

Field work by the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform indicates implementation of BRAC recommendations, funding issues, and the future of TFI as they affect the Air National Guard, remain highly problematic. The order of the movement of platforms and personnel is unclear, as is the order in which new missions can be assigned, personnel trained and equipment funded. It is not clear when wings scheduled to receive aircraft from other bases will actually receive them. Many men and women of the Air National Guard are not being given clear information on when and how BRAC and TFI will be rolled out or how it will affect their ability to carry out their current mission requirements.

Therefore, I request that GAO review the status and impact of the BRAC 2005 recommendations and implementation of the TFI plan. Please focus the review on the following questions in an effort to determine the effects of BRAC and TFI on the readiness of the Air National Guard to perform missions at home and abroad in the near and long terms:

- To what extent are the Air Force and the BRAC Commission compliant with BRAC law regarding the assessment of military value criteria data? Was emphasis, if any, was placed by the Air Force on homeland defense needs?
- What are the challenges to implementing BRAC ANG recommendations? By what processes and protocols do responsible parties communicate and work together on implementation? How are decisions communicated to States and then to ANG wings?
- What implementation has been done to date on BRAC and TFI? What plans are in place for future implementation? How timely are decisions being made and who is making them? How realistic are these plans?
- How does current implementation of BRAC and TFI affect Air National Guard readiness to perform the current Air Sovereignty Alert mission and AEF missions? How long will this implementation effect readiness and in what areas? How does the traditional AF inspection cycle effect ANG wings under current high operational tempo?
- What changes might be needed to current BRAC processes to insure appropriate and timely procedures, clear decision making protocols, and accountability to personnel and readiness during implementation?

If you have any questions regarding this request please contact [REDACTED] at (202) 225-5074.

Sincerely,



Tom Davis
Chairman